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THE  
Reformed  
CATHOLIQUE:  
OR, THE  
True Protestant.

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MATTH. 24. 26.

*There shall arise* FALSE CHRISTS and FALSE  
P R O P H E T S.

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The Second Edition Corrected.



L O N D O N,

Printed for *Henry Brome*, at the *Gum* in *St. Paul's*  
Church-yard, at the *West End*, 1679. λ

THE  
COMMON  
CATHOLIC  
OR, THE  
True Protestant

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Cathedral, at the West Wall, 1865.

T H E  
Reformed Catholique :  
O R,  
The True Protestant.



His Paper should have come into the World under the Form of a Letter (as most Pamphlets of quality do of late) if the Author had not made a Conscience of covering the Simplicity of his purpose under any sort of Disguise ; so that without so much as a single *How do ye*, to usher it in, he comes point blank to the Business in the very Title. It may be looked upon, I know, as a thing of *Ill Omen*, to begin with an *Alias* : But there is neither *Priest* nor *Highway-man* in our Case ; and yet there may be cause enough perhaps for a kind of *Hue and Cry* too ; for it is a matter of great moment that every man should both *go*, and be *known* by his right Name ; and (peradventure) never more necessary than in this juncture, and in this particular : And so to my Text :

*A Reformed Catholique* (properly so called) *is an Apostolical Christian*, or a *Son of the Church of England* : *A true*

*Protestant* may be so too; nay, and many times he ~~is~~ so; and many a *Loyal, Orthodox, Reformed Catholique* calls himself so; and (according to the stile of the Age) he may be well enough said and accounted so to be. But all this is only by *Adoption*, and without any colour for it in the Original of his *Denomination*. Now a *Protestant*, in strictness of speaking, is a *Lutheran*, which this Church does not in all points pretend to be, and then the *Characteristical Note* of a *Christian* is *Catholique*; so that the *Appellation* is too narrow for the *Principle*, and draws on the very same Implication in a *Protestant Catholique*, which we make sport with in a *Roman-Catholique*, that is to say, the Solœcism of a *Particular Universality*.

Here is enough already (I suppose) to furnish an Extract of as much Popery out of it, as may recommend some hungry Informer to a Mornings-draught; for we have a sort of people now-a-days, that will read a mans Heart through his Ribs, though they can hardly see his Nose on his Face; and that give more Credit to their Ears than to their Eyes. Now to ease the Reader in two or three peevish points, if he should chance to be *Over-critical* and *Imperious*, I will tell him before-hand, in a few words, what he is to trust to.

To the *first Question* or *Objection* fairly supposed; the Author is no *Disguised* or *Concealed Papist*, but of the Communion of the Church of *England*, trained up in the strictest way of it, and standing firm to it against all sorts of Provocation, Discouragement, Temptation, and Argument; and without warping to the *Jesuites*, either on the *right hand* or on the *left*.

To the *Second*: He is not set on to write this Discourse, either directly or indirectly, by any Hint, Desire, or Appointment whatsoever; nor by any other Motive than the sense of what he owes to the Publique, and to his Conscience, and the Consideration of some small Present from  
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the Book-seller. if there be any thing got by it. (A piece of *Good Husbandry* that he hath learnt of his *Superiors*.) He hath no design upon any *Place at Court* in it, nor upon any *Church Lease*; no not so much as a *Reversion*: And all this is True, by the Faith of a poor Gentleman, that hath worn his Doublet out at the Elbows in his Majesties Service. It might be added, that he is grown Old and Careless, and that even Malice it self were lost upon him. Now under these Circumstances, I hope he may securely advance to tell you a little more of his mind.

So faras *Catholique* and *Protestant* serve only as two several Names, intending the self-same thing, (though the one by *Propriety*, and the other but by *Translation*) it is all one to me whether of the two any man calls me; all the danger is, the countenancing of an Ill Thing under a Good Name.

The word *Protestancy* falls under a double acceptation; the one, as it denotes the *Reformed Religion*; the other, as it is taken for the *Genus Generalissimum* of all *Dissenters from the Church of Rome*. The former I do heartily embrace, as transmitted to us from our Fore-fathers, and Signed by the Blood of Martyrs; Authorized by the Holy Gospel, and by the Law of the Land; the common Bond of our Civil Peace, and (by Gods Blessing) the Hopes and Means of our Eternal Salvation.

Now to the latter *Acceptation*, I am not at all satisfied with it, and I have both *Reason* and *Experience* to warrant me in that dislike. As to my *Reason*; First, It is an *Agreement* upon an *Opposition*; and next, it is an *Agreement of several Parties disagreeing among themselves*, which carries the Face rather of a *Confederacy*, than a *Religion*: For it is not the *Opposing of Error*, but the asserting of a *Truth*, that must do the work. One *Error* may be opposed by another, even in a Single Person; as one man Robs his Neighbour, and a third Robs him. Here is one *Injustice opposed by another*: So

that as it is an *Agreement in Opposition*, it is a hundred to one there will be *Error* in it: But the *Opposers* themselves being *subdivided*, 'tis impossible it should be *Right*; for the very *Essence* and *Soul* of *Religion* are here wanting; that is to say, *Charity* and *Unity*. And for the proof of this, beyond all *Contradiction*; let but any man look back into the late *Troubles*, and see, when the *Factions* had destroyed the *King* and the *Church*, (which they called the *Common Enemy*) how they fell presently to the *Worrying* of one another; when the *Presbyterians*, *Independents*, *Anabaptists*, *Quakers*, *Seekers*, *Ranters*, *Antinomians*, and twenty other wild sorts of *Scſſaries*, under the title of *Protestants*, and under the pretence of opposing *Popery*, destroyed the very Cause the *Covenanted* to assert; a *Protestant-Church*, a *Protestant-Prince*, and a *Protestant-People*, filled the *Land* with *Confusion*, *Sacrilege*, and *Hereſie*; made the *Engliſh Nation* a *Reproach* and a *Scandal* to the *Chriſtian World*: And ſo ſoon as they had poſſeſſed themſelves of the *Power* and *Revenue* of the *Kingdom*, every mans hand was againſt his *Brother* for the *Booty*.

To proceed now to the matter of *Experience*: I would fain ſee any one *Instance* from the very *Reformation it ſelf*, to *this day*, when ever there was a *Clamour* advanced upon this point, of a *Conjunct Opposition* of *Popery*, that the *Church of England* was not iſtruck at in the *Confederacy*; and that too, not by blind *Inferences* and tacit *Preſumption*, but by *Ouvert acts*, and a *Notoriety of Praſſice*: That is to ſay, the *Men* that ſtickled under this *Notion*, did poſitively declare the *Government* by *Biſhops* to be *Antichriſtian*; and the *Discipline* and *Common Prayers* of the *Church*, to be *Popery* and *Superſtition*; yes, and the *Ciivil Adminiſtration it ſelf* alſo to be down-right *Tyranny*. They did juſt like the *Fellows* in *Hatton-Garden*, that *Stole Money* and *Plate*, under the pretence of *Searching for Priests*; and for the *Credit* of the *Exploit*, they *Robbed* in *Red Coats*

*Coats* too, that they might the better pass for some of his *Majesties Guards*. The Similitude runs upon all Four, for it was the very case of our pretended *Protestants*; under colour of hunting for *Priests*, they seized *Money* and *Plate*, and committed *Robberies* in the very *Livery* of the *Government*.

This they did in *Scotland*, under the *Queen Regent*, and *King James*; and in *England*, under *Queen Elizabeth*; and twice in *Scotland* again, under the late *King*; and after that, in *England*: Two actual *Rebellions* more in *Scotland*, under this present *King*, and now God bless us from another *at Home*; and all this from that sort of people that stiled themselves *Protestants*. The *Principles*, the *Methods*, and the *Pretences* the very same, from one end to the other.

The Story of these *Phanatical Conspiracies* is almost as *Nauseous* as the thing it self is *Detestable*; only this last in *Scotland* methinks seems to Crown the *Infamy* of all the rest: For a *Party* that calls it self *Protestant*; a *Party* in full Cry upon the scent of *Popery*; a *Popish Plot* upon *Oath* too, at the same time upon the *Life* of the *King*, upon our *Religion* and *Government*; and that *Plot*, at that instant, under a strict Examination; the same *Party* at the same time also pressing for *Justice* upon the *Conspirators*, nay, and complaining of the remissness of the *Prosecution*, notwithstanding the most exemplary *Rigor* in the *Case* that ever was known in this *Nation*: For this *Party*, (I say) under these *Circumstances*, to flie in the *Face* of the *Government*, let the *World* judge if ever there was a more *Consummated* piece of *Wickedness*. They raise a *Rebellion*, and make *Religion* the *Ground* of it; they declare a *War* against the *King*, and the *Church*, and yet write themselves *Loyal Subjects* and *Protestants*. They cry out of the *Danger* of *Popery*, and yet in the same breath, draw their *Swords* upon their *Prince*, in the very attempt of *Crushing* it; and all these

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Aggravations complicated into one Act. Is it not high time then, after an Imposture that hath cost this Nation so dear, to learn at last to distinguish betwixt a *Religion* and a *Faction*? Betwixt what men *are*, and what they *call* themselves? Is a *Renegado* ever the less a *Turk* for putting out *English Colours*? Are the *Blessed Spirits* ever the less *Pure*, for the *Devils* transforming himself into an *Angel of Light*? Is the *Kings Broad Seal* one jot the less Valuable for being *Counterfeited*? So neither is our *Profession*. And he that dishonours *Religion*, or invades *Authority* under the Name of a *Protestant*, is no more to any sober man, than a *Goth* or a *Vandal*. Judas his *Betraying* of his Master was a most ungrateful and abominable Sin, but the doing of it with a *Kiss*, made it by many degrees more execrable: And it was the height of the Prophet  *Davids* Affliction, the Circumstance of a *Familiar Friend*. Where is the harm now of saying, *Have a care of False Protestants*: The *Author* and the *Finisher* of our *Faith*, is (I hope) of Authority sufficient to justify that Caution. Doth not our *Saviour* himself tell us that *there shall arise False Christs* and False Prophets? and why not *False Protestants*? And doth he not bid us *take heed that no man deceive us*; for many (says he) *shall come in my Name, saying I am Christ, and shall deceive many*? Doth he not bid us *beware of Wolves in Sheeps Cloathing*? And in his description of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, he gives us the very Picture of our *Impostors*.

We have it upon the credit of *Dr. Tong*, and *Dr. Oats*, that the Sedition of 1641. was totally contrived and carried on by *Popish Counsels*; and that not onely the *Conventicles* in that Bloody Revolution, but all our *Separate Meetings* to this day, and particularly the *Scottish Commotions* were and are Influenced by *Priests* and *Jesuites*, under the Masque of Professors of those several Persuasions. Have we not reason then to use all possible Circumspection, that we may not be imposed upon by such as these for *Protestants*? No  
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man hath a greater Veneration for the memory of those Protestants that suffered Martyrdom for their *Faith*; no man a greater *Horror* for the *Irish*, the *Parisian*, and several other *Massacres*; no man a higher Esteem, or a more Ardent affection for *Protestancy* it self, (so far as the Profession of the Church of *England* is intended by it) than I have. But for those Turbulent Spirits that lay about them as if Heaven were to be taken by *actual Violence*; whose Zeal outstrips Christianity it self, imposing upon the World their own corrupt and impetuous passions, in stead of the Healing and Pacifique Motions of the Holy Ghost. These are a dangerous sort of people, and their ways are not onely a Contradiction to the undeniable Principles of our *Institution*, but to the common Interest of *Mankind*, as well *Individuals* as *Communities*. For if it be true, that *Charity* is the great Lesson of the Gospel: If it be true, that *Unity* in *Faith*, and *Unanimity* in the things of *Civil Government*, would make up the most perfected Blessing that reasonable Nature is capable of in this Tabernacle of Flesh; then must it necessarily follow, that the nearer we approach to *that Agreement*, the *better Christians* we are, and the *happier Men*; and the further we depart *from it*, the more *Wicked* and the more *Miserable* we are. This is either true or false: If the former, there is no Treason in it; if the latter, we may burn our Bibles.

Before I wade any farther into this Controversie, it may do well, I think, to give some Reason, why upon *this Subject*, and at *this Time*; that the World may not take that for the Leaven of an Unquiet Humour, which in great Truth, is onely an act of Conscience in the discharge of a sober and a seasonable duty to my Prince and Country.

To the undertaking of this Office, I have been induced, by the Audacious Liberties of the Press, in the



the matter of Religion and Government, endeavouring to possess the Multitude with False and Pernicious Principles and Opinions, and by Artificial Hints and Scandals to dispose them (now toward the meeting of this next Parliament) to a Partial and a Factious Choice: So that my Business is onely to encounter and lay open the Vanity and Weakness of those Libels, and without confining my self to any one in particular, to sum up the Malice of them all, for so much as concerns our present purpose, and to submit my self to the Reader in a fair and short Reply.

It is a Note worthy of Consideration, that all the Papers here in question, (even to a single Sheet) are the Work of Men exceedingly Biassed against the *Established Government*, as *Republicans*, *Anabaptists*, and other sorts of *Dissenters* from the Church; for the Publishers of these Papers are known every one of them, and most of the Authors. Now what advice toward the *Honour* and *Safety* of the Government, these People are likely to give, who are United in common *Principles* of *Defaming*, *Discomposing*, and even of *Dissolving* it, let Heaven and Earth be the Judges: And what work such a House of Commons would make, as these forward Undertakers would have, if they were to direct and influence the Election.

Now if *these* be the *Counsellors*, let us see next if the *Matter* of their *Writings* be not answerable to the *Character* of the *Men*; and if it be not most evident that it is their very scope and design (so far from endeavouring the Peace and Settlement of the Nation) to poison the People with *Seditious Maxims*; to create *Jealousies* betwixt the *King* and his *Subjects*, and to Undermine the very Foundation of the Government.

They support themselves with the Multitude, upon two *General* and *Popular Pretensions*, *Religion*, and *Liberty*: *What Religion*, or *what Liberty*, they do not say; but only fill the Peoples heads with a confused Notion of things,  
and

and wild apprehensions of *Poper*y and *Tyranny*: And then their next work is under colour of stating the *Privileges* of *King* and *People*; to Erect *Seditious Positions*; and after all, to prescribe Remedies infinitely worse then the Disease. We shall now make it appear that the *Religion* they talk of, leads to all sorts of *Impiety*; and that their pretended *Liberty* is the ready way to *Slavery*. First, of *Religion*.

As to what concerns *Religion*, they do all of them sing the same Song in their *Queries* and *Proposals* to the *Freeholders* and *Electors* of *England*, and unanimously agree in the same method of Advice to the People, how they are to govern themselves in their next Choice.

Their first Caution is, *To pursue the Discovery and Punishment of the Plot*, (*the Trojan Horse with an Army in the Belly of it.*) *To secure us from Popery*; and that no Papist may be allowed to dwell in the Land; Nor any man chosen into the House, that shall dare to open his mouth for a Popish Successor: And all this attended with a Dreadful Enumeration of the *Massacres*, *Fires*, *Treasons*, and *Devastations* that have been wrought by the *Popish Party*.

To this first Point, the *Replicant* most willingly subscribes, so far as stands with *Christian Charity*, and the *Law of the Land*: But then he cannot forget on the other hand, that the *Counterfeit Protestant Horse of 1641. had an Army in the Belly of him*, as well as the *Trojan*; and he that would be safe, must look both ways at once.

Another Caution is, not to choose any man that is *Popishly affected*; or (as another hath it) *Ill affected*. But a third proceeds a little more warily, and recommends the chusing onely of *Sincere Protestants*, and not *Disguised Papists*, who are ready to pull off their Masque, when time serves, and may be known by their Laughing at the Plot, Disgracing the Evidence, Admiring the Traitors Constancy, &c.



This same *Popishly* and *Ill-affected*, lies open to several Exceptions; for one Man is made Judge of the Thoughts of another, which is onely the Prerogative of Almighty God. I have heard of a man that was Indicted for *Whifling*; but never till now, of any Man that was Incapacitated to serve in the House of Commons, for *Thinking*. Beside the unreasonable Latitude, and the Horrible Iniquity of the Judgment; for if this be admitted, no man living can be secure: It involves the Innocent with the Guilty, and puts a man out of all possibility to acquit himself. And then forward; It is but turning the *Tables*, and the *Blot* is hit on *the other side*: For why should not I be as well allowed to pronounce *another man a Disguised Protestant*, as he to judge *me a Disguised Papist*, and the same Liberty of Marking him too? You shall know him by his *Skibolet*; for the *Old Covenant* sticks in his Teeth still, and the whole mystery of his Profession is wrapt up in that Oracle of the *Privileges of Parliament*; the *Kings Just Power and Greatness*; the *Protestant Religion against Popery*, and *Popish Innovations*; the first point being wholly *Incomprehensible*, and the other two, like *Jugglers Knots*, fast or loose at pleasure.

This equal Freedom being granted on all sides, takes away all Faith, Confidence, and Correspondence in Humane Society. I know no difference in the World betwixt *one mans Infallibility* and *another*s; nor any (but in *Terms*) betwixt a *Private mans Infallible Light*, and the *Popes Infalible Sentence*: Nor is there any one Usurpation in *Popery*, that is either *Grievous* to the *Conscience*, or *Dangerous* to the *Government*; but a man may shew very near an *Equivalent* of it in *Schism*.

As to the Marks of distinction betwixt a *Sincere Protestant* and a *Disguised Papist*; the *Immorality of Laughing at the Plot*, favours more in my opinion, of an *Unmannerly Fool*, than of a *Disguised Papist*; though for my own part, I

am so far from *Laughing at it*, that it wounds my soul, the very thought on't. *Disgracing of the Evidence* were something indeed; but to make a man a *Papist* for *admiring the Traitors Constancy*, that, methinks is very hard, and not answerable to what one would expect from an Advocate for Liberty of Conscience. It is much easier to relinquish an *Opinion*, then for a man to devest himself of *Natural Affections*; and more unreasonable to *claim* a freedom in the one, then to *refuse* it in the other. I must confess, *I do admire that Constancy*, and if I were to die for so doing, I could not but *admire* it still: And these Impressions are Humane, and not to be resisted.

We fall now into the Old Track of the whole Party: They call for *Toleration*; complain of *Persecution*; cast all their Sufferings upon their *Worshipping according to their Consciences*; and then this Lamentable Condition of theirs must be *Remonstrated to the whole Nation*. Of these Four Points in order.

In the handling of their *Plea for Protestant Dissenters*, there are many things to be taken into Consideration. *First*, Is it in matters of *Conscience*, or onely of *Phanſie*, wherein they desire to be *Indulged*? If the *Latter*, the upholding of a *Law* is certainly of much greater concern, than the gratifying of a *Caprice*. Now on the other side, if they demand it upon an *Exigent of Conscience*: *First*, Why *Plurally*, for *Dissenters*? When one man cannot honestly undertake for another mans *Conscience*: Besides that (*Secondly*) They ask an *Indulgence* for *several Parties*, of *divided Consciences* and *Opinions*: And in short, they would have the Magistrate favour *all the Consciences*, that will not endure one anothers. Again; They should do well to explain what they mean by *Protestant Dissenters*, upon points of *Conscience*; whether *all in general*, or only *such and such Parties*: If *all in general*, *Heathens* must be Tolerated as well as *Christians*, for they have *Consciences* as well as we:

Or if it be restrained to *Christianity*, it opens a door to *Heresies*, more detestable than *Paganism* it self. So that an *Universal Toleration* is utterly *Unlawful*; and a *Partial Toleration* on the other hand, is as *Ineffectual*; for upon a Plea of *Conscience* they may all claim alike: So that it is an *Act of Uniformity* still, to those that are *Excluded*; and it is not fair, in the Government, to favour one half, and exasperate another, where all may as well be taken in, as any. Beside, upon the supposal of a *Limited Toleration*, who shall judge which are fit to be admitted, and which not? If the People, every man justifies himself, and then we are upon an *Universal Toleration* again. They tell us stories of *sound Faith, good Life*, and of distinguishing betwixt *Fundamentals* and not *Fundamentals*; which is onely treading of the same Ring still; for it may be every bodies Plea as well as any mans: That which the Magistrate judges one way, the People shall determine another: and one mans *Fundamental Truth* shall be anothers *Fundamental Error*, which will introduce as many *Religions* as *Phantasies*; bring *Factions* into *Families* as well as into *Governments*, and make the People both *Parties* and *Judges*: And it is not to say that the *Word of God* shall be the Judge, for that is only a *Rule* by which we are to judge; and by *Erroneous judgments* it is made the *Foundation* of all *Heresies*; For when every man may make his own Creed, there is nothing so *Impious*, but he will shew you a Text for it. Moreover, the very pretence of *Liberty of Conscience* is *frivolous*; for *Conscience* is out of the reach of *Humane Power*; and the *freedom of Thought*, no Law can either punish or take away.

But it is the *Liberty of Acting*, as well as of *Thinking*, that they insist upon, which upon the whole matter, is neither more nor less than a *Licence to do what they please*. The *League in Flanders*, under *Maximilian*; the *Holy League* under *Henry the 3d. of France*; *Muncers Outrages* in *Germany*; the *Murderers of Henry the 4th.* and the *P. of Orange*; and

all the Villanies of the late Times here at home, were acted under the *Masque of Religion*. It is not for the restraining of *Opinions* that *Laws* are provided; but for the preventing of *Overt Deeds of Violence*, and they are punished for *Action*, not for *Conscience*. Neither have we any means of distinguishing betwixt *Faction* and *Religion*, if every mans word shall be taken for *his own Conscience*; and then it is a dangerous way of dividing a Kingdom against it self.

Take notice all this while, that they urge a *Toleration*, no body knows for *whom*, or for *what*. Where are their *Articles*? where is the *Model* of their *Accommodation*? or how is it possible to contrive any *common Expedient* to gratifie them? For nothing less than a *total Liberty of doing what they list*, will please them, which must inevitably produce the *Dissolution* of the *Government*. If they would have the *wilder* and more *extravagant Sects* excluded, why do they plead for *All* in general, and not rather particularize the *Opinions* and *Parties* that they would have *Indulged*? But they dare not do *this*, for fear of disobliging the rest, their business being to *Unite all Factions* in the *Quarrel*; when yet you may as soon bring *Heaven and Hell together*, as reconcile them in *Religion*; so that either they ask an *Impious* thing, in the allowance of *all*, or an *Impracticable* thing in propounding any *Limitation*, upon a *Plea of Conscience*. But the truth is no more than this: They ask a thing which can neither be *granted*, nor so much as *understood*; and the People are transported with the sound of *Loyalty* and *Religion*, to the desire of things wholly *Inconsistent* with either *Piety* or *Government*.

We should do well to take notice, that against *this Plea for Liberty*, there is on the *one side*, the *Authority of a Law*, and the solemn *judgment of the Church* for the *Equity* of it; and on the *other*, the *Kings Personal and Political Conscience* for the *Execution* of it. There is also the *Duty* of a *Subject* for the *Obeying* of it; and the *same reason* that *Au-*  
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thorizes an *Invasion* of this *Law*, may as well *Invalidate* all the rest. Now the *Counterpoize* to all this weight, is (at best) onely the *naked Conscience* of some *private Persons*. The *Peoples Consciences* call for *Liberty*; and the *Governors Conscience* requires *Order*: Their *Consciences* will not down with this *Law*, nor this *Law* with such *Consciences*: Which of the two now shall yield to the other?

But what *benefit* might we now expect from this *Indulgence* here, if it were granted? Or rather, in the first place, what colour of *Conscience*, or of *Reason* is there in the very demand it self (all the aforesaid exceptions over and above?) Is it, first, *Reasonable* for them to ask what they themselves think *unreasonable* to grant? Or to claim such an *allowance* to themselves, as a point of *Conscience*, which they themselves, upon a point of *Conscience*, refuse to others? For there is not any one *Party* in the whole mass of *Dissenters*, that does not deny the same freedom to others which they do jointly challenge to themselves: Nay, in their very *Propositions* to his Majesty in the *Isle of Wight*, Mar. 1647. they Excepted the Use of the *Common-Prayer*, when they gave *Liberty* to all other sorts of *Worship*. (To which *Concession* they were then Compelled by the Circumstances of that *Juncture*.) Their *Refusal* must proceed either upon the *Right* of the thing, or upon *Reason of State*. If they did not like our way, neither do we approve of theirs: Or if they excluded us out of a respect to the *Publique Peace*, the Government hath still the same reason against them.

But we shall better understand the *Party*, from their own words, wherein we shall First, take a short view of their *Opinions* in matter of *Faith*, and *Religion*. Secondly, How they stand affected, one *Party* to another: And Thirdly, Their *Positions* and *Practices*, with Relation to the *Civil Government*.



As to their *Opinions*, first see some Extravagances of the *Sectaries*, Cited by a *Presbyterian*, out of their own Writings, in *Edwards's Gangræna*, from P. 18, to 27.

They say that *the Scriptures are Insufficient and Uncertain*. God *the Author of Sin*, even of the Sinfulness it self. That *the Magistrate ought not to punish any man for denying of a God, if his Conscience be so persuaded*. That every Creature is God, an Efflux only from God, and shall return to him: That there is but One Person in the Divine Nature. That the least Truth is of more worth than Jesus Christ himself. That the Doctrine of Repentance is a Soul-destroying Doctrine. That 'tis as possible for Christ himself to Sin, as for a Child of God to Sin. That the Moral Law is of no use at all to Believers. That Peters Trouble, after the denial of his Master, issued only from the weakness of his Faith. That Infants rise not again. Nay, he speaks of a Sectary pleading for a Toleration of Witches, with several abominable Instances. And he charges the Nursery and Increase of them upon the Presbyterians; and that it was their Indulgence, not Episcopal Connivence that wrought our Mischief in that kind. They agree (says he) with Julian the Apostate, Libertines, Atheists, Unclean, Incestuous, Drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, Liers, Jugglers, Slanderers, Proud and Boasting, Insolent, Outragious, Hypocritical, False.

The Sectaries on the other hand, call *the Assembly*, Antichristian, Romish, Bloody, Plagues, and Pests of the Kingdom, Baals Priests, Southsayers: The Presbyterian Government a Limb of Antichrist, Tyrannical, Lordly, an Egyptian Bondage. An Anabaptist said, He hoped to see Heaven and Earth on fire, before Presbytery should be settled; and to see it troden under foot, as the Bishops. Sterry himself says, The Seed of God hath two Capital Enemies, Romish Papacy and the Scotch Presbytery. See what the Presbyterians say now to a Toleration.

It is much (says the London Ministers Letter to the Assembly,) Jan. 1. 45. that our Brethren should separate from the Church, but that they should endeavour to get a Warrant to Authorize their Separation from it; and to have Liberty (by drawing Members out of it) to weaken and diminish it, till (so far as lies in them) they have brought it to nothing: This we think to be plainly Unlawful.

And then the Harmony of the Lancashire Ministers, p. 12. Toleration would be the putting the Sword in a Mad Mans hand; a Proclaiming Liberty to the Wolves, to come into Christs Flock to prey upon his Lambs.

Toleration makes the Scripture a Nose of Wax; a Rule of Faith to all Religions. And this is the great Rabby of the Party. Rutherfords Free Disp. p. 360. Liber-

*Liberty of Conscience, and Toleration of all, or any Religion, is so Prodigious an Impiety, that this Religious Parliament cannot but abhor the very naming of it. Bailies Disswative Epist. Ded. 1645.*

*It is unreasonable (says the Defender of the London Ministers Letter to the Assembly, Anti-Toleration, p. 16.) that Independents should desire that Toleration of Presbyters, which they would not give to Presbyters.*

Let it be observed from hence, that these people do first demand of the Government that Liberty which they deny to one another. And Secondly: That they pretend to do it upon Conscience, and yet hold the thing it self to be absolutely Unlawful; so that they justify the Conscience of our denying it to them, by the Conscience of their refusing it to others. And the onely way to evade this, is to discover all; by confessing, that though they now beg a Toleration from the Government, yet if they get power in their hands, they will make a Conscience again (as they did before) of allowing any freedom to the Government.

It is a clear case, that their demands are Unwarrantable, Impracticable, Unreasonable, and not grounded upon Conscience, but directly in Opposition to it; as we have it under their own hands.

Let us try now if we can discover what the design is, since it appears manifestly what it is not; and that, not only from the Reason of the thing, but from their own deeds and writings; and those matters also, and Positions, expounded by Practice.

One thing remarkable is this; That they have been still *Fishing in Troubled Waters*, and taking advantage of all Distresses, and necessities of the Government. Did not Cartwright, Coppinger, Arthington, and Hacket, take their time for that Execrable Conspiracy against Queen Elizabeth, when she was just upon the very point of securing the Reformed Religion against the Power and Church of Rome? Did not the *Sectaries* in 1641. take the same advantage against the late King, when his thoughts were wholly taken



ken up about suppressing the *Irish Rebellion*? And did not the latter *Scotch Tumults* take the same advantage of his Majesties being under many troublefom Circumstances about the *Plot*; and when the Peoples minds were prepared to take ill Impressions in the matter of Government? So that the very *Timing* of this Revived *Clamour* for *Liberty of Conscience*, looks suspiciously; and the more, because their Meetings here have of late been very little interrupted.

To run thorough those pestilent *Principles*, which the Heads of the *Seſtaries* have published in their own Names, were endless. Wherefore I shall content my self with some of their *General Positions*, and refer the Reader to *Husbands Collections*, or the *Authors themselves* for the rest; as *Milton*, *Goodwin*, *Rutherford*, and a hundred more.

They make the *Lords* and *Commons* the *Supream Power*; nay, the *People themselves*, in some Cases; *Princes* they say may be *deposed* and put to death: They distinguish betwixt the *Kings Person* and his *Authority*, the *Letter* of the *Law*, and the *Equity* of it; and appeal from the *Written Law* to the *Law of Nature*; and according to these *Maxims* they govern their *Proceedings*.

But will you see now the price of all our *Bloud* and *Confusion*?

Upon their Petition to his Majesty for a *Reformation* of the *Liturgy*, the King most graciously issued out a *Commission* for a *Review* of the *Book of Common Prayer*: An equal number of *Learned Divines*, both *Episcopal* and *Presbyterian* were appointed to meet about it, and to agree upon such *Alterations* as should be thought most *Necessary*. His Majesty earnestly desiring that the *Ministers* would not totally lay aside the *Book of Common Prayer*, but read those parts against which there could be no *Exception*. Now instead of most *necessary Alterations*, and those to be agreed upon by *Both Parties*, they published a *New Liturgy* of their own, under the Title of *The Reformation*

*of the Liturgy, (which was indeed the Abolition of it.) I will give you onely a Taste of ſome of their Important ſcruples that are caſt into the Ballance, againſt the Unity of the Church, and the Peace of the Kingdom : They turn Wedded Wife into Married : Doſt thou Believe into do you Believe; and all this I Steadfaſtly Believe, into this I do Unfeignedly Believe.*

Let us now ſuppoſe theſe People had their *Askings* : Let any man but ſhew me from the *Minority of King James*, to this hour, where they were not the more violent and importune upon yielding (even to the hazard of a downright Rebellion) and the Author ſhall give any man his Head, for the Preſident : Did not the *Assembly* in 1578. impoſe upon the *Parliament* in Scotland, ſhall foul upon the Arch-biſhop of *Glaſgow*, and the whole Order ? paſs a *Decree* againſt their *Votes in Parliament*; command them to renounce their *Temporal Titles*, and *Civil Jurisdiction*, and ſet their *Quarriers* at work for the demolishing of *Glaſgow Cathedral*? (which had been done too, if the *Tradesmen* had not by force prevented it.) And did they not grow bolder and bolder upon the Kings Lenity; and Command the *Biſhops*, upon pain of *Excommunication*, not to Officiate as *Paſtors*, without *Licence* from the *General Aſſembly*; and likewise order the *Patrimony* of the *Church* to be diſpoſed of as they ſhould ſee meet? And did they not after that, make a Violent and Treasonous Seizure of the *King* at *Ruthven*, and juſtifie it when they had done? And ſo on by degrees, till his Maſteſty was forced, by a Tumult at *Edenburgh*, in 1596. and the *Ministers Bond of Confederacy* immediately upon it, to a Reſolution of *Rigour* and *Severity*; which (as *Spotswood* obſerves) gave him more quiet and ſecurity for the future.

His Maſteſty was no ſooner entered upon the Government of *England*, but he was Affaulted in 1604. with the ſame ſort of people; and at a Conference at *Hampton Court*,  
this

this Question was put, *How far an Ordinance of the Church was Binding, without offence to Christian Liberty?* Whereupon the King gave this short Answer, *Let us have no more of these Questions, but Conform at your peril.* So that they gave him no further trouble upon that subject. And this was Queen Elizabeths Case too, to the hazard both of her Life and Government; till by that severe Act against them, of the 35 of her Reign, she gave her self ease for the remainder of her Life.

What did the Late King gain by his Indulgence to the Scots in 1637. but farther Indignities and Contempt? First, the Service-Book and Canons were their Grievance; then the Five Articles of Perth, though established both by the General Assembly and Parliament; The High-Commission next, and then the Bishops Session in Civil Judicatories. His Majesty gratifies them in every point: Inlomuch, that they had nothing further to complain of, but that the King would not Abolish Episcopacy, and admit the Authority of their Lay-Elders; upon which point they brake out into an Open Rebellion. After this, upon the Interview of the two Armies at Berwick (when the King had them absolutely at his Mercy) upon their Supplication for a Treaty, he Trusted them again, and concluded upon a Pacification; of which the Covenanters did not keep so much as one Article.

Upon his Majesties Return to London, he passes the Triennial Bill; Abolishes the Star Chamber and High-Commission Court; Passes an Act for the Continuance of the Parliament; and in fine, denies them nothing but his Crown and his Blood; and then by Virtue of what he had given them already, they took away the rest, and stript him of his Friends, his Authority, his Revenue, and his Life.

They minister great cause of suspicion in their very stile and scruples: Why do they run so much upon Ambiguities?

As the settling of Religion in its *Due Latitude*; a *Due* and necessary *Reformation*; *Sound Belief*; *Principles Congruous to a National Settlement*; the *Kings Just Rights*; *Importance of Interests*; *Stated Order in the Church*, &c. What is all this, but a jumbling together of so many Amusements, to pass a Colourable Pretence upon the People? And it signifies just nothing, but what Construction they shall think fit to allow it. If they would offer any *Pertinent, Intelligible, and Practicable Proposition*; and say, what *Injunctions* they would have abated; what *Parties* they would recommend for these qualifications; *where to find them, and who shall judge of them*. If they would State their *Demands*, and say, *This is all we ask*; and then rest there: If, as they plead for *all Dissenters*, they would produce some *Common Instrument, or Commission*, to shew that they are *Authorized by all* to Solicite in *their Names*, and to treat upon *such or such Points*; and to go no further, the business might be brought yet to some rational Issue.

As their *Stile* is exceeding *Dark and Mysterious*, so are their *Scruples* of an *Extraordinary Quality* too? They cannot *kneel at the Sacrament*, but they can *hold up their hands at the Covenant*; they can *dispense with the Oath of Allegiance*, and yet make a *scruple of disclaiming the Solemn League*: They can *swallow a Schism* (or worse) and yet a *Ceremony* choaks them. Add to all this, many of those very persons that promoted our former Troubles, *this very way*, are now at work again upon the *same Pretension*; and may, without breach of Charity, be suspected to have the same design, and to remain in a state of *Impenitency*, if they have not manifested their *Repentance* by some *Open Recantation*: For (according to the *Casuits*) *Publique Sins require Publique Confessions*.

It is an ill sign too, for a man to leap upon the sudden, from matter of *Conscience* to *Reason of State*; and in the same

same breath of a *Petitioner* to become a *Reformer*. It would seem a strange thing, for a man to request a special favour from the Master of a Family, and at the same time to put affronts upon his *Domesticks*, and to tell him that his *Servants* were all of them a pack of *Rascals*; which is not much from the point now in hand.

We have had abundance of *Advice* to the *Free-holders* of *England*, toward the choice of this next *Parliament*; as *Sober and Seasonable Queries*, *Englands Great Interest*; the *Free-holders Choice*, and *twenty more*; and all of them agreeing in the *general Heads* one with another: They tell us who are *fit* to be chosen, and who *not*.

The former, *such as will remove and bring to Justice Evil Counsellors*; *Corrupt and Arbitrary Ministers of State*; *Detect and Punish the Pensioners of the former Parliament in the face of the Kingdom, and they must chuse such as will secure us from Slavery*.

The People are directed on the *other side*, not to chuse a man that hath been reputed a *Pensioner*, no *Court-Officer*, or whose *Employment is* *durante bene-placito*; no *Ambitious men*; or *Non-residents*; that live here in *Town*, and seek *Honours and Preferments* above.

This is the *Counsel of Englands Grand Interest*: And methinks, in these *Qualifications*, there is both too much, and too little. As to the point of *Evil Counsellors, Corrupt Ministers and Pensioners*, he should have done well to have advised them all manner of *Caution and Circumspection*, for fear of mistaking their Men. This was the way that brought the *Earl of Strafford*, and the *Archbishop of Canterbury* to their *Ends*, under the *Notion of Evil Counsellors* too, though perhaps, *the most necessary Instruments that ever this Nation enjoyed, for the Common good both of King and People*. So that as it a great Service to bring *Corrupt Ministers to Publique Justice*, it is yet a lewd Method to make the *Rabble the Executioners*, and to punish *Male-Administration*



*ministration* by *Sedition* : For in this Case the Good and the Bad fall indifferently without distinction ; and instead of drawing here and there a piece of *Rotten Timber* toward a *Reparation*, they fall foul upon the main *Pillars* and *Supporters* of the House ; so that all falls into Ruins. And then the mark of a **Reputed Pensioner** goes a little too far ; for it lies in the power of two or three Malevolent Tongues to make any man so. They that made the *last King* a *Reputed Papist*, shall much more easily make any of his Majesties Subjects pass for *Reputed Pensioners*.

The total Exclusion of all *Court Officers*, or *Bene-placito men*, is yet worse : For this sets up a direct Opposition betwixt the King and his People ; as who should say, *Trust nobody that wears any token of the Kings favour*. And the same reason disables him as well to any other *Trust whatsoever* : So that the Kings *Countenance* is a kind of *Incapacity*. And it is the same thing with those he calls *Ambitious Men* ; as if any Application to his Majesty made a Man unfit for the Service of his Country. He should have done well to have warned them against the *Known Enemies* of the *Government*, rather than the *Suspected Servants* of the *King*.

*The Free-holders Choice* is a very *Martin Mar-Prelate*. His Language against the Clergy is too coarse for an Honest man to repeat after him, but he has ranged them in good Company ; for he says that *they lay out themselves, to accommodate their Masters, with the veriest Villains that can be pick'd up in all the Country ; that so we may fall into the hands again of as Treacherous and Lewd a Parliament as the Wisdom of God, and Folly of Man hath most miraculously freed us from*. Methinks some of the Members of that Parliament should concern themselves to call for Justice upon so foul a Scandal.

The Author of the *Seasonable Queries*, does not onely recommend the same Cautions with the rest, but calls his  
Ma-

Majesty himself to Shrift, and puts the *Question*, whether Prorogation and Dissolution of Parliaments, at such a time as this, does not fill the hearts of Protestant Subjects with evident fears of destruction?

And Secondly (says he) *Whether it be not high time for all the Protestants in England, to Resolve as one man, that they will stand by, and maintain the Power and Privileges of Parliament, together with the Power and Just Rights of the King, according to the Laws of the Kingdom, so as the One may not intrench upon the Other.*

The former *Expostulation* upon the Reason of the Kings Proceedings, would have been more taken notice of perhaps, if it had not been followed with one of the most Audacious Challenges that this Licentious season hath produced; for the meaning of it is, to encourage a direct *Rising*, as if the King and the Parliament were going together by the Ears, (forgive the Expression) and the People to interpose, to see Fair Play.

This is the very Trace of the *Old Covenant*: They must resolve to maintain *no body knows what* on the one side; (for the *Privileges of Parliament* are past finding out:) But then they are to stand by the King, on the other side, with a *Limitation*; only in his *Just Rights*, and of those Bounds, they themselves are to be the Judges. This *Epithete* was applied to the late Kings Case, by those very men that cut off his Head.

The Author of *Englands Great Interest*, having directed the Good People what persons to choose for the ensuing Parliament, and what not, His next work is to instruct them in the Knowledge of their *Powers*, which he divides into three Rights or *Fundamentals*. The First is *Property*, that is, a Right and Title to their own Lives, Liberties, and Estates. For the Law (he says) is *Umpire* between King, Lords, and Commons; and the Right and Property is one in kind, through all Degrees and Qualities in the Kingdom. Mark that.

Why



Why does he not say that the *King* is *Umpire* betwixt *King*, *Lords*, and *Commons*, as well as that the *Law* is so? For the *Law* is only the *Kings Pleasure* made known; and the whole Force and Authority of it, is but an Emanation from *Sovereign Power*. And then for his *Three Fundamentals*: As I am a *Commoner* of *England* my self, I should be loth to lose any Right of an *English man*; and yet as I am a *Loyal Subject* also, I should be as unwilling to encroach upon the *Privileges* of the *Crown*. I do not know what he means by his *one in kind*; with the *Emphasis* of *Mark that* upon it. If it be, that the *People* have as much Right to their *Lives*, *Liberties*, and *Estates*, as the *King* himself hath; though it be true in some sense, it will not hold yet, as he would have it understood. For the *People* may forfeit their *Lives*, *Liberties*, and *Estates*, but the *King* cannot forfeit his: Wherefore *Mark that* too.

His Second Fundamental is *Legislation*: Or, the Power of making *Laws*; for no *Law* can be made or *Abrogated* (he says) in *England* without them.

It is not Candidly done, to call that the very act of *Legislation*, which is only *Consultive* and *Preparative* towards it. The making of *Laws*, is a *Peculiar* and *Incommunicable Prerogative* of *Sovereignty*; so that to place the *Legislative Power* in the *Commons*, is to make them *Supream*; and to set a *King* of *England* once more at the *Commons Bar*. Beside that, his *Inference* is as *Inconsequent*, as his *Affertion* is *Dangerous*. As if a *Law* must necessarily be made *By* them, because it cannot be *Made* or *Abrogated* without them. Does he that furnishes the *Ingredients*, therefore make the *Medicine*, because the *Medicine* cannot be made without the *Ingredients*? What signifies the *Form* of an *Instrument* to the passing of an *Authority* or *Obligation*, without *Signing* and *Sealing*? Yet the one cannot be done without the other. Does the *Council* that draws the *Conveyance*

veyance, pass away the *Estate* ; because the *Act* could not have been good *without* him? And again, the *Law* in this Case, is no other then a *Promise* under the *Kings Hand*, past to the *People*, and partakes of the Nature of other Promises. It was *made* by the *Promiser*, and cannot be *discharged* without the Consent of those to whom it was *promised*.

*His Third Fundamental is Executive, and holds Proportion with the other two, in order to compleat both their Freedom and Security ; and that is their share (as he says) in the Judicatory Power ; in the Execution and Application of those Laws that they Agree to be made.*

A *Judicatory Power* without Authority to minister an *Oath*, is to me, I must confess, a new thing : And now for the word *Agree* ; though it may be pertinent enough to his purpose (for there needs no more to the Undoing of the most Regular Government upon the Face of the Earth, then *First* to turn the Peoples hearts against it, and then to possess them that they have a *Legal Remedy* in their *Own hands*.) Yet *that word* (I say) in this place, is very improper ; for it is but a *Request* presented to his Majesty for his *Approbation*. The *Request* or *Bill*, is no doubt *agreed* upon ; but it were an Uncouth kind of Expression for a *Petitioner* to say that he does *Agree* that his Petition shall be *Granted*.

The Business is fairly push'd already : But the Publisher of a *Pretended Speech* lately printed, carries it a step further.

*If a Prince (says he) be Born to a Kingdom, who is either Lunatique, or otherwise disabled to do the Kingdom any good, shall not the Subjects, in this Case, proceed to chuse another, who may preserve the Kingdom, when otherwise it must of necessity perish ? As lately in the Case of Portugal, they chose another to Succeed, because of the Disability of the former.*

This is, in plain terms, a *Deposing Principle*: For if a *King* may be *Removed*, in such Case of *Disability*, the *People* being made *Judges* of the Case, *it is but their saying that he is not fit to Govern, and the work is done.*

There is a Sheet printed under the Title of *A Plea, &c.* that hath more Brains and Art in it then ordinary. He says that a *King is not for his Own, but his Subjects sake onely*; and that we have, in truth, rather Title, &c. to Him, then He to Us. Adding, That when *Kings* themselves be **Ill Ones**, God not onely approves of their Removal, but even himself does It: This he supports upon Texts extreamly misapplied.

Let it be agreed now that a *Prince* is rather Constituted for the good of the *People*, then the *People* for the advantage of the *Prince*. But let it be granted also on the other side, that Providence hath made Order so necessary to the well-being of Mankind, that *Tyranny* it self is yet more Tolerable then either *Anarchy* or *Sedition*: So that in the matter of Obedience to *Superiours*, we find our Convenience, even in our Duty. He plainly infers, that because God himself does many times remove *Ill Kings*, that therefore he approves of our doing so too. But First, we are not to draw Gods *Extraordinary ways* into *Precedent*. By the same Rule, *Plunder* was formerly justified upon a *Scriptural Commission* for the spoiling of the *Ægyptians*. Secondly: The very admittance, that an *Ill King* may be *Removed*, makes way to the destruction of a *Good one*; for 'tis but saying he is so, to make him so, and it leaves him barely at the mercy of the *People*: And this is not all neither, for it turns up the very Root of Government, and casts Humane Affairs into a Circulation of Confusion. The *Two Houses* Deposed the *King*; the *Commons* the *Lords*; the *Multitude* they Deposed the *Commons*; and all upon the same Charge of *Misdemeanor*. So that the *Trustee* being still accomptable to those that Entrusted him, the Order of Government is Inverted, and the last Appeal lodged in the Rabble.

It

It is a strange thing that our *Protestant Dissenters* should so Unanimously agree in their Methods of *Opposing Authority*, and yet keep at so great a *distance* in all things else; for how scrupuloussoever they may seem be in *Set Forms of Devotion*, they are the strictest people of the World, in the observance of a *Set Form of Wrangling* with the Government: For an *Out-cry of Persecution* does as naturally follow a *Plea for Liberty*, as one Foot follows another.

Doth not such a day as this (says our Quærist) loudly call for Repentance, that Protestants have been *Persecuting* each other; and for *Unity in affection* among all Protestant Subjects, whether *Conforming or Dissenting* in some lesser Points; and that as Brethren, they Unite in such a *Combination of Conjunction*, as was in *Q. Elizabeths time*, with good Success to defend the Crown, Religion, and Kingdom, against the Common Enemy of Mankind?

Since the *Persecution of this Age* lies so heavy upon him, and that nothing will serve his turn, but the *Uniting of Protestants* in such a *Combination* as was in the days of *Q. Elizabeth*, it will not be amiss to look a little into the Behaviour of the *Protestant Dissenters* in those days, and the *Indulgence* which they received from that Gracious Princefs.

The *Non-Conformists* that Fled, in *Queen Maries time* to *Franckfort*, and went off from the *English Reformed Catholiques* there, to the *Protestant Dissenters* at *Geneva*, these *Non-Conformists* (I say) returned for *England* upon *Q. Elizabeths* coming to the Crown; and for the first ten years of her Reign, plied her so hard with *Libels, Clamour, and Seditious Consultations*, that betwixt the *Papists* on the one hand, and the *Protestant Dissenters* on the other, she had much ado to secure the Peace of her Government: And not being in Condition to venture upon any course of Rigor or Severity, the *Protestant Dissenters* in the fourteenth year of her Reign, Erected a Model of their own; called it

the Church, Libell'd the *Queen, Parliament, and Lords*; and afterward entered into a Formal *Conspiracy* against her *Majesty and Council*; which being detected, some were Executed, and others Imprisoned: So that at last, by one severe Law of the 35th. of her Reign, she put an end to that Confederacy.

Here was the *Unity* of the *Combination* our Pamphleter speaks of; and we'll give you now the Provision it self that did the business, with the *Prescribed form* of their *Submission*.

The Penalties were Imprisonment, without Bail or Main-prize, for being present at Unlawful Conventicles. The Offender to be discharged, if within three months he made his Open Submission and Acknowledgment, in the Form by the said Statute appointed. But in case of Recusancy, to Conform within that time, he was requir'd to Abjure the Realm; and in case of refusing to Abjure, or of not departing within a Limited time, or of Returning without Licence, to be proceeded against as a Felon, without Benefit of Clergy.

*Here follows the Form of Submission.*

I A. B. do humbly confess and acknowledge that I have grievously offended God, in Contemning her *Majesties* Lawful Government and Authority, by absenting my self from Church, and from hearing Divine Service, contrary to the *Godly* Laws and Statutes of this Realm; and in using and frequenting disorder'd and unlawful Conventicles and Assemblies, under the pretence and colour of Exercise of Religion: And I am heartily sorry for the same, &c.

You see here what Quarter was both given and taken under *Q. Elizabeth*, which shews that the *Quarist* was little read in History, to appeal to the Practices of those Times, either for the *Innocence* of the Party, or the *forbearance* of them. But hear what *Englands Interest* says to this matter.

Oh! Lay to heart (says he) the *Grievous* Spoils and Ruines that have been laid upon your harmless Neighbours for near these twenty years. Sixty pounds distrained for Twelve.

Two



Two Hundred for Sixty : The Flocks taken out of the Fold ; the Herd from the Stall : Not a Cow left to give Milk to the Orphans, nor a Bed for the Widow to lie on : Whole Barns of Corn swept away, and not a Penny returned. And all this, for Worshipping of God according to their Conscience. If you (says he to the Free-holders) will either Compel or Persecute your selves, or choose such as do, you hate the Papists, but not Popery.

This is so Errant a Cant of Begging, as if the Protestant-Dissenters had served their Trade in Moor-fields ; and it runs too in the very Tone and Stile of their Petitions and Admonitions to Q. Elizabeth, and so down by a clear Succession to this Instant. There were Citations, Degrading, and Deprivations ; some in the Marshalseas, some in the White Lion, some in the Gatehouse at Westminster, others in the Counter, or in the Clink, or in Bridewel, or in Newgate. How many good Mens deaths have the Bishops been the Cause of ? How many have they driven to leave their Ministry, and live by Physick ? Men have been miserably handled with Revilings, Imprisonments, Banishments, &c. If this Persecution be not provided for, a great trouble will come of it.

Under K. James, no man (they said) could be assured of his Lands or Life. And under the Late King, how were these poor people Oppressed by Fines, Imprisonments, Stigmatisings, Deprivations, Suspensions, Excommunicated, Out-law'd, Beggered, Proceeded against with punishments Pecuniary and Corporal ; nay, Death it self : And now they are at the same lock again.

But what are these People (for the Love of God) that are thus miserably used all this while ? Why truly (if we may take their own words for it) under Q. Elizabeth they were Loyal Subjects, and Gods faithful Servants ; most Worthy, Faithful, and Painful Ministers ; Learned and Godly, Unreproveable before all men ; the Strength of the Land,  
and

and the *Sinew* of her Majesties Government. Under King *James*, they were men of *Conscience*, Preservers of the *Churches Right*, and Asserters of the *Holy Discipline*. Under the *Late King*, they took up the Titles of Men of *Tender Consciences*, *Well-affected*; Men that had the *Power of Godliness*, *Painful*, *Laborious Preachers of the Word*; *Faithful* in their Generation, and men *Zealous* in the defence of the *Protestant Religion*, the *Privileges of Parliament*, and of his Majesty in his *Iust Rights*. And in our days, they call themselves *Lovers of Gods Ordinances*, and *Enemies* of all *Humane Inventions*; a People *Zealous of Religion*; *sound in the Faith*, *Intelligent*, *Sober*, *Numerous*, *Peaceable*, *Orthodox*: The *Ceremonies* they look upon as an *Excess*; they dissent from the *outward Order of Worship*, (for the *Conscience* will interpose in the Dictates and Injunctions of men, in *Divine Worship*.) All these People agreeing in this common Complaint, that they are *Persecuted for Worshipping according to Conscience*. Whether they do *well* or *ill*; whether they speak *true* or *false*; whether they have *Reason* on their side, or *not*, in these *Remonstrances* let the Reader judge.

Let it be first observed, that the Author dates this Persecution from his Majesties *Return*; *near these twenty years* (he says) as if there had never been any such thing before; whereas from the time of *Q. Elizabeths Act* above-mentioned, to the very Act for *Uniformity*, (the late *Times* excepted) the Church was never without a *Legal Provision* for the preventing and suppressing of *Conventicles*; and the *Law* much more *Rigorously* put in Execution. Beside that, as they were more or less *Indulged*, the Nation was still more or less at quiet.

Observe again, that there is no notice taken of the *Liberty* of the *Late Times*, or the deplorable *Effects* of that *Licence*, though the *Presbyterians little Finger* was heavier then the *Loins* of the *Bishops*, in the point of Restraint,



as we have shewed already, from the mouths of the other *Seſtaries*. But they are too prudent to fall foul *one upon another*, when their buſineſs is to join in a *Confederate Party* againſt the *Government*: So that they are now *One and All*, and every ſeparate Opinion ſtickles for all the reſt: And then comes on the Cry of the *Orphans* and *Widows* againſt the Cruelty of the *Oppreſſor*: *Sixty Pounds Diſtrained for Twelve; Two hundred for Sixty, &c.* Me-thinks the Plainiff ſhould have been ſo ingenuous, as to have reflected upon the Perſecutions that other men ſuffered even from theſe people that now complain of a Perſecution; and that *they ſuffered for Worſhipping according to their Conſciences too*, and they had not only *Religion* on their ſide, but *Law* alſo; whereas the other founded a *Rebellion* upon a pretended ſcruple of *Religion*, and oppoſed the *Rules of Chriſtianity* and *Civil Authority*, both in one: But it is a *Perſecution* to them, to be kept from *Perſecuting*.

Neither does this Clamour keep it ſelf within the bounds of *Spiritual* matters, but breaks in upon the *Civil Adminiſtration*, and alarms the Multitude with the terrible apprehenſions likewiſe of *Tyranny* and *Slavery*. Wherefore we are enforced to oppoſe the *ſenſible Experiment* of an *actual Tyranny and Slavery* to the *artificial and imaginary fears* of it; to leave all Mortals without excuſe, that ſhall read theſe plain and well-meaning Papers, if ever they ſhould fall into the ſame miſtakes again.

The taking away of mens *Goods* and *Liberties*, the forcing of their *Conſciences*, and tying them up to an *Implicit Obedience* to the *Decrees of Government*, are terrible things, I muſt confeſs: But yet much worſe ſure, where they run directly *againſt* the Stream of a *Received Authority* and *Uſage*, then where the *ſo doing* is Warranted by *known Laws* and *uninterrupted Practice*.

There are several sorts of *Persecution* : A *Persecution* in matter of *Conscience*, *Good Name*, *Propriety of Goods* and *Estate* ; *Freedom of Person*, and that is the most odious Aggravation of *Persecution*, when it is set up in defiance of a *Publique Law*, and Introduced under a colour of *kindness* to all *these Interests*. We will be as short in these Particulars as we can, and leave the Reader to say where the *Odium* of the *Persecution* lies.

*First*, to the point of *Conscience*. It was the judgment of the *Late Royalists*, that they were obliged in *Conscience* and *Duty*, to pay Obedience to the *Laws*, both *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical* ; and with the hazard of their *Lives* and *Fortunes*, to endeavour the preservation both of the *Church* and *State*. The *Protestant Dissenters* pretended the same respect for the *King* and *Church*, with the *Royal Party* : And when by popular Pretexts they had ingratiated themselves with the Multitude, they plaid their Game the contrary way, and took up *Arms against* the *Government*, which they Swore to *Defend*. Now see at what a rate they treated, not only the *Friends* of the *Government*, but the *Government* it self.

There were a *hundred and fifteen Ministers* Ejected, with- in the *Bills of Mortality*, beside *Pauls* and *Westminster* ; and in proportion, all the Nation over, for refusing to comply with the *Schism* ; and they were not so much as suffered to take the Employment of either a *Schoolmaster*, or a *Chaplain*, but under heavy penalties. Several of our Divines were choaked up and poisoned in *Peter-House*, and other Goals, either for *Worshipping according to their Consciences*, or *Refusing to act against them*. No Man admitted to Compound, or so much as Live in the *Parliaments Quarters*, without *Swearing*. Men were *Sequestered* for not joining in the *Rebellion* ; for assisting the *King* according to the *Law*, and for *not Covenanting*, though in exprefs Contradiction to the Oath of *Allegiance*. Upon the

the Abolition of the *Common Prayer*, severe Penalties imposed upon any man that should use it; and their own *Directory* imposed upon a Forfeiture too; nay, they would not allow the King himself, in his Distresses, the Comfort of any of his own *Chaplains*, nor so much as the benefit of a *Common-Prayer-Book*: And at *Fife* in *Scotland*, there was an *Oath* given at the *Communion*, not to take the *Kings Oath*, nor any other then their Own. — Was all this an Invasion of the *Liberty of Conscience*, or not?

Touching a *Persecution* now, upon the point of *Good Name*: Though the whole course of the History is full of Virulent and Unchristian Reflections, I will only refer my self to that *Diabolical Libel of Whites Centuries of Scandalous Ministers*: wherein without any regard to *Truth* or *Modesty*, they have exposed so many *Reverend Names* to *Infamy* and *Dishonour*. In one word; After they had represented the *King himself* for a *Tyrant*, and an *Idolater*, it was but Consonant that they should cast *Reproaches* upon his Party.

Touching the *Freedom* of our *Persons* and *Estates*, the whole course of the late War, was but one continued Usurpation upon our Rights to both: Noble mens Houses turned to Prisons, and People Committed, without knowing either their Accusers, or their Offence: Some clapped on Shipboard to be Transported, no body knew whither; and others sold into Plantations for Slaves. To say nothing of those that fell by the Sword, in the Defence of their Countrey; or otherwise past the hand of the Executioner, in Justification of their Religion and Allegiance. There was no taking of Threescore pounds for Twelve, in those days; nor of Two hundred for Sixty. But they took All for nothing; and there was no Living amongst them for any Honest man, that would not prostitute his Conscience. And who are they now, but

either the very persons, or men however of these very principles, that acted these Outrages upon Us, and yet now complain of being persecuted *themselves*? When they startle the Common People with the Notions of Cruelty and Slavery, as a matter now in prospect; methinks they should Blush at the Memory, and upon the Guilt of those Real Calamities which we have both seen and felt, wherein our blessed Sovereign had yet a greater share than any of his Subjects.

*They Abolished Kingly Government; Sold the Crown-Lands; Imprisoned and Murthered the King; made it Treason to deny the Supremacy of the Commons; turned our Churches into Stables; Burnt our Communion Tables, and profaned the very Ashes of the Dead.* Let but any man read *Scobels Acts*, and say, if the *English* were not in those Times, and under these *Protestant Dissenters*, the most Despicable Slaves in Nature. See their *Tax* upon the *Fifth and Twentieth* part, their *Excises* upon *Excise*; their *Assessments* for the Maintenance of the *Army*, and their *Monthly Taxes* for the same end. *Ninety thousand pounds; Sixscore thousand pounds, Sixty thousand pounds, Sequestrations, Seizing of peoples Rents and Debts, Appropriating to themselves the profits of Tonnage and Poundage, and Compositions for Wards.* Authorizing the *breaking open of Locks*, and *Examining upon Oath* for discovery of *Delinquents Money and Estates.* All this is as well known, as the very fact of the War it self; and if we have a mind to lie down under the same Bondage again, let us believe the *Stories of Arbitrary Government and Superstition*, that these people tell us of, and they shall just so help us out of them again, as they did before.

There should be something further said to their pretence of being *Persecuted for Religion*; but I find little to be added to what is already delivered. *The Law stands still:* They press upon the *Law*, and yet cry out, that the *Law* perfe-

persecutes them. We may lay down this, I think, for a Maxim; That whosoever tells us that he makes a Conscience of Complying with the Discipline of the Church, and yet manifestly makes none at all, of undermining, nay and of blowing up the whole frame of the Government, that man is most undoubtedly an Hypocrite.

To Conclude: What's the meaning of this Remonstrating to the People? They are no Judges of the Controversie: But they do well however, in a Cause, where Force does a great deal more than Argument, to make their Application to the Multitude, with whom Clamour and Pretence are of more Value than Modesty and Reason. It is a most Ridiculous Contradiction to Common Sense, to believe these men to be in earnest; for if they were, they would never Defame the Government, at the same time that they beg a Dispensation from it.

Their Demand is unreasonable, the thing it self only Notional and Impracticable. By Liberty of Conscience, they mean a Freedom of doing what they please, which necessarily implies a total Dissolution of the Laws. They offer it only as a Decoy to the People; and when they have gained Compassion to themselves (like Beggars that move pity by shewing Ulcers of their own making) their next business is to draw Contempts upon the Government, and after that, to enter without more ado, upon the Great Work of Reformation. Let me do this Right however to the Independents: I do not find that Party to have given the Government any trouble since his Majesties Return; but that they have kept themselves clear of all these late Broils: And if Authority had the same sense of them, with the Author of this Pamphlet, they would be found both in their Principles and in their Manners, to have the most reasonable Claim of all sorts of Dissenters, to a favourable allowance from the Government. God in his Mercy open our Eyes, that we may know our Friends from our Enemies.